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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 21, 2016

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**MAYOR EMANUEL, CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT AND FIELD MUSEUM ANNOUNCE LOCAL  
TEAMS OF ARTISTS AND NON-PROFITS TO CREATE GATHERING SPACES ALONG  
CITY'S SOUTH LAKEFRONT**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the Chicago Park District and officials with the Field Museum of Natural History today announced that five gathering spaces within the Burnham Wildlife Corridor, which will be created by five teams of artists and community-based organizations.

The Burnham Wildlife Corridor is a 100-acre ribbon of natural areas located within Burnham Park along Chicago's south lakefront.

"These gathering spaces along the south lakefront are part of our effort to give children and residents in every neighborhood the opportunity to learn about nature and to enjoy and experience nature right in their own backyard," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "These unique gathering spaces will add to the vibrancy of Chicago's south lakefront while helping to inspire the next generation to preserve and protect Chicago's natural wonders."

The Corridor extends from the McCormick Bird Sanctuary in the north to the Burnham Nature Sanctuary in the south. Its various sections are at different points in the ecological restoration process, but, upon completion, the Burnham Wildlife Corridor will be the largest contiguous stretch of natural areas along the Chicago lakefront. Through a Request for Proposals, Chicago Park District and The Field Museum challenged teams of artists and community-based organizations to produce gathering spaces within the Burnham Wildlife Corridor that are reflective of nature and culture and will serve as assembly grounds and rest areas for people exploring this part of the lakefront. The designated gathering spaces locations are situated on both the east and west sides of Lake Shore Drive.

"The objective of the Burnham Wildlife Corridor is to create healthy, vibrant and native habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife; and to meaningfully connect visitors,

especially those from neighboring communities, to a revitalized public green space in ways that inspire exploration, enjoyment, and stewardship of the area,” said Chicago Park District Superintendent and CEO Mike Kelly. “We are pleased to partner with these organizations to create spaces where community members can gather and take advantage of nature in this bustling city,” he said.

The winning teams were selected by an independent Curatorial Committee, in consultation with Chicago Park District and The Field Museum, from an original pool of 22 proposals. All winning teams have prior public art experience and are based in and/or have meaningful connections to the Corridor’s neighboring communities of Bronzeville, Chinatown, Little Village, and Pilsen. Over the course of the next two years, the community-based organizations that are affiliated with the winning teams will help activate the gathering spaces through programming that celebrates the ecological context and cultural significance of these installations. In support of the teams’ efforts, Chicago Park District is awarding \$20,000 grants to each group. Over the course of two years, the community-based organizations that are affiliated with the winning teams will help activate the gathering spaces through programming that celebrates the ecological context and cultural significance of these installations.

**La Ronda Parataka (lead artists: Hector Duarte, Alfonso “Piloto” Nieves; non-profit: Casa Michoacan)**

This project is a circular sculpture inspired by the magic symbolism of the butterfly, harmony with nature, and migration. It will be demarcated by a delicate sculptural ring or “ronda” (in Spanish) of interlocking butterfly forms. The center of the space will feature native plants and cement blocks that are being repurposed as rustic seating. Located in the Pilsen community, **Casa Michoacan** is an educational nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of cultural, social, sporting activities and between the Mexican and immigrant Michoacán community with a transnational vision.

**Caracol (lead artists: Georgina Valverde, Diana Solis; non-profit: contratiempo)**

This project is based on the interior shape of the conch shell —a logarithmic spiral-- which represents the desire to belong while also maintaining the core of memory and identity. Language and images will feature prominently within a spiral open-ended structure that can function as a work or picnic table and community mural surface. The table/mural will be covered with wood or concrete slabs that can be painted with designs by community groups and artists. The installation will also include repurposed wooden stumps as stools and a stage for outdoor performances, as well as native plants and sculptural artistic elements. Founded in 2003 by a cohort of Latino writers in Chicago and based in Pilsen,

**contratiempo** is a literary center with a mission to preserve and highlight the cultural identity and contributions of the Spanish-speaking Latino population in the United States.

**Set in Stone (lead artists: Andy Bellomo, Anna Murphy; non-profit: Chinese-American Museum of Chicago)**

The goal of this project is to create an interpretation of a traditional Chinese “scholar’s rock” by sculpting, molding and fabricating a sculpture that emulates the magnificence felt through viewing these rocks. The rock sculpture will stand 7feet tall and vary in width from 1-3 feet. The sculpture will be painted to represent the beauty and texture of a scholar’s rock. The sculpture will then be placed at the center of a tranquil rock garden with smaller rocks covering the base and one or two small log benches for viewing. **The Chinese-American Museum of Chicago** is located in the city’s Chinatown community and has the mission of promoting the culture and history of Chinese-Americans in the Midwest through exhibitions, education and research.

**Sounding Bronzeville (lead artists: Fo Wilson, Norman Teague; non-profit: Bronzeville Community Development Partnership)**

This project includes several organic, amorphous sculptural forms. They will rise from the site in different heights and shapes and have native plant material covering them. The function of some of the forms will be to define the boundaries of the area, while other forms will provide seating. Some will have “sound ports” or “nesting ports.” These openings will allow for visibility through them as well as opportunities for specific audial experiences between people. Founded in 1987 and located in Bronzeville, the **Bronzeville Community Development Partnership** focuses on information technology, heritage tourism, hospitality workforce development and training, preservation and sustainability.

**Sankofa for the Earth (lead artists: Arlene Turner Crawford, Dorian Sylvain, Raymond Thomas; non-profit: South Side Community Arts Center)**

This project features a “Sankofa” bird made from mixed-media (paint, wood, and mosaic) and recycled materials. In Africa, a bird looking backwards over its tail represents the Sankofa symbol, which means “Go back and fetch it.” It is an understanding that our past(s) holds important information to move us forward in life. A support for the bird will be constructed of bamboo, found and recycled wood, metal electrical conduit piping, and leather binding. Seating will be created from repurposed wood. The **South Side Community Arts Center**, which is located in Bronzeville, seeks to preserve, conserve and promote the legacy and future of African American art and artists while educating the community on the value of art and culture.

Each team is expected to complete its respective installation by June 2016.

In addition to the new gathering spaces within the Burnham Wildlife Corridor, the Chicago Park District is working with the Chicago Architecture Biennial to create new Lakefront Kiosks—to activate cultural life on Chicago's lakefront through creative architectural solutions. The Chicago Park District currently oversees more than 40 kiosks that punctuate the shoreline. During the summer, the kiosks offer food, retail and recreational services—ranging from beverages to clothing to surf rentals.

The gathering spaces and kiosks are components of Mayor Emanuel's comprehensive strategy of investments along the Lakefront, the Chicago River, parks and neighborhoods for residents across Chicago; the Mayor will unveil this new plan in a speech he will deliver on Tuesday.

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